



School Noticeboard

Special Edition: Monday 5 June 2017

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From the Director

Dear Colleagues,

We live in troubling and disturbing times. This is the fifth time that we have issued guidance prompted by terrorist attacks: the first in Paris, then Brussels, events in Manchester just two weeks ago and now the second attack in London. This time it wasn't children and families who were targeted, as in Manchester, but the twenty something crowds out to enjoy themselves in one of the busiest areas of the capital on a Saturday night. Cllr Chatfield, Cabinet Member for Transparency, Openness and Equality, and Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, have written powerfully, asserting that our democratic society will continue to flourish in the face of such clear attempts to undermine it and scare people. A vigil is planned for 6pm this evening outside St Phillip's Cathedral.

For our school pupils and students, these attacks raise so many issues ranging from the most basic questions (Why? Who does these terrible things? Are we safe in Birmingham?) through to advanced political, sociological discussion about the significance of terrorist attacks and how this relates to community cohesion. Inevitably there will be tensions in some classrooms and playgrounds and we have been alerted to difficult conversations that teachers have needed to negotiate post-Manchester. The social dynamic differs greatly across our city and each school knows its pupils, students and families better than anyone else. Schools have a unique pastoral role in the community in such situations as the universal state service that reaches all of the children and young people and is the counterweight to any intolerant views that may be aired at home.

So how are we doing in Birmingham? We have well-trying and tested approaches including No Outsiders and the [Birmingham Curriculum Statement](#). Record numbers of schools have signed up to the UNICEF Rights Respecting Award: the ultimate form of long-term safeguarding. Our engagement with Prevent operates well on many levels and we have unique ways of working with West Midlands Police. Birmingham's schools are amongst the safest and most resilient in the country. Race hate crimes reported to the police in England shot up in the wake of Paris and the Brexit conversations unleashed overt or covert "dog whistle" racist behaviours. However, we know that this didn't happen in Birmingham. That's because you have created such an inclusive, safe and tolerant culture.

The London attack was designed to destroy that culture. But it isn't going to happen. Rather, it reinforces our long-held aims to promote the very best values of democracy, fairness, tolerance and inclusivity. We hope that you find the materials in this Red Noticeboard helpful. Don't hesitate to contact us if we can do anything to support you on the front line.

Best wishes

Colin



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Message from Cllr Tristan Chatfield and Cllr Brigid Jones

It is with great sadness that we find ourselves having to write to you all once again. The attack on the people of London on Saturday night was another example of a barbarous group of individuals trying to sow fear and terror. We are sure you will wish to join us in sending our heartfelt condolences to the victims and their families.

The people of Birmingham will stand together against those that seek to divide us. The best response to evil attacks such as those we have witnessed in recent weeks is to stand by our values, treat each other with respect and continue to live our lives as we wish. We must continue to work together to build a cohesive society and to ensure that extremism has no place within it. Britain is an open and tolerant country and we should all join the fight to ensure that this remains the case. And the General Election, a fundamental pillar of our democracy, will go ahead on Thursday as the best demonstration to the world of our values.

We know that the children and young people of our city want to live in a tolerant and safe society. It is our responsibility to ensure that we work towards that objective and do not allow terrorism to divide us. Our democracy is our greatest asset and we will not allow it to be undermined. The simple act of voting on Thursday, whether it be yourselves or your family, will be a strong rebuttal to those who hate our way of life.

Please pause for a moment to think of those who have lost their lives or been injured in this horrific attack. We should also recognise the work of those battling to keep us safe. Our emergency services are at the forefront of the fight against terrorism and we should thank them for their dedication on our behalf. Their contribution to our collective safety is immense.

Cllr Tristan Chatfield
Cabinet Member for Transparency, Openness and Equality

Cllr Brigid Jones
Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools

Message from the Lord Mayor of Birmingham

I am saddened and appalled that once again terrorists have struck our country and have killed and injured innocent people in the capital city. Again, on behalf of the city and the people of Birmingham I send deepest condolences to the families and friends of those affected. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Cllr Anne Underwood, Lord Mayor of Birmingham

Home Office advice following London attacks

Information about the support available for people affected by the attacks at London Bridge and Borough Market on 3 June 2017 is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/london-bridge-and-borough-market-attacks-june-2017-support-for-people-affected>

This web page contains advice on where to seek urgent assistance and information, including the official helplines for this incident. It also provides guidance on support services available for victims, witnesses, family members, and all those affected by the attacks.

Statement from West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police is working closely with the Metropolitan Police and other organisations and will take “any steps necessary to keep people safe”, says Chief Constable Dave Thompson.

Chief Constable Dave Thompson’s full statement is available at www.west-midlands.police.uk/latest-news/news.aspx?id=5727

The Run, Hide, Tell guidance is **included later in this Noticeboard** as well as in the curriculum resource. It is available online at <http://www.npcc.police.uk/NPCCBusinessAreas/WeaponAttacksStaySafe.aspx>

The anti-terrorist hotline is 0800 789 321.

Curriculum resource

Attached with this Noticeboard is a curriculum resource produced by Ayisha Ali from the Education Resilience team. This contains teaching resources and teacher guidance.

A range of PREVENT CPD sessions will be taking place over the next few weeks and places can be booked via Eventbrite using this link <https://www.eventbrite.com/d/uk--birmingham/birmingham-prevent-cpd/?crt=regular&sort=best>

CONTACT: Ayisha Ali / Razia Butt, Education Resilience team

EMAIL: 0121 464 7739

Planned Education Visits and Lockdown Guidance

Some schools have asked for advice about planned trips to Parliament and other places of interest. As with any school trip there should be a risk assessment, taking into account any new information leading up to the trip. The latest attack in London does not necessarily mean a trip must be cancelled but a review of the risks must be undertaken and a decision made by the trip organisers as to whether the risks are great enough to cancel the trip. The assessment should take into account place, people, security and the type of event or activity planned. It is down to each individual school and responsible officer to decide whether they think a trip should be cancelled.

The Lockdown Guidance provides advice on trips away from school and can be accessed here: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/school_lockdown_guidance. Schools with planned trips to Parliament will be contacted by the Education Service at Parliament if a cancellation is likely. The contact details are here: <http://www.parliament.uk/education/visit-parliament-with-your-school?cat=summer>

CONTACT: Razia Butt, Resilience Adviser

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Muslim Council of Britain Response

Harun Khan, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain has issued the following statement after the terrorist incident in London:

“I am appalled and angered by the terrorist attacks at London Bridge and Borough Market, in my home city. These acts of violence were truly shocking and I condemn them in the strongest terms. Muslims everywhere are outraged and disgusted at these cowards who once again have destroyed the lives of our fellow Britons. That this should happen in this month of Ramadan, when many Muslims were praying and fasting only goes to show that these people respect neither life nor faith.

My prayers are with the victims and all those affected. I commend the work of our emergency services working hard to keep us safe and cope with the ensuing carnage. As ever we urge everyone to assist the authorities so that these criminals can be apprehended and brought to justice.”

Advice from Jill Crosbie for supporting pupils

At this time children will want a chance to express their sorrow about the terrible events in London and many of you will be discussing this in assembly. Reflective writing is often helpful and schools can provide a safe space for children to explore their feelings so you may wish to provide a space for children to record condolences or hold a minute's silence.

Whatever you do, it will help children manage their feelings at this difficult time.

Jill Crosbie, Acting Assistant Director SEND
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PSHE Association advice

Advice from the PSHE Association for teachers on discussing terrorist attacks is **attached at the end of this Noticeboard** and is also available at <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/sites/default/files/Discussing%20a%20terrorist%20attack%20with%20primary%20children.pdf>

Support from Educational Psychology

Children at different developmental stages will have a very different understanding of what has happened. If schools would like advice on how to communicate messages in ways that can be understood by different age groups, please contact Educational Psychology.

Schools can contact Amanda Daniels, Principal Educational Psychologist, for further advice or support.

CONTACT: Amanda Daniels, Principal Educational Psychologist
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Run, Hide, Tell: Advice from the Police Chiefs' Council



IN THE RARE EVENT OF
a firearms or weapons attack

RUN HIDE TELL



RUN to a place of safety. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's nowhere to go, then...

HIDE. It's better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally and only when it is safe to do so...

TELL the police by calling 999.

Talking about terrorism: tips for parents from the NSPCC

Schools may find this advice from the NSPCC useful to help parents to support their children when talking about terrorism.

Children are exposed to news in many ways, and what they see can worry them. Our advice can help you have a conversation with your child:

- listen carefully to a child's fears and worries
- offer reassurance and comfort
- avoid complicated and worrying explanations that could be frightening and confusing
- help them find advice and support to [understand distressing events and feelings](#)
- children can always [contact Childline](#) free and confidentially on the phone and online.

It's also important to address bullying and abuse following the terrorist attacks.

- **Some children may feel targeted because of their faith or appearance**
Look for signs of bullying, and make sure that they know they can talk with you about it. Often children might feel scared or embarrassed, so reassure them it's not their fault that this is happening, and that they can always talk to you or another adult they trust. Alert your child's school so that they can be aware of the issue.
- **Dealing with offensive or unkind comments about a child's faith or background**
If you think this is happening, it's important to intervene. Calmly explain that comments like this are not acceptable. Your child should also understand that someone's beliefs do not make them a terrorist. Explain that most people are as scared and hurt by the attacks as your child is. You could ask them how they think the other child felt, or ask them how they felt when someone said something unkind to them. Explain what you will do next, such as telling your child's school, and what you expect them to do.

Link to the full article here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/supporting-children-worried-about-terrorism/>

Discussing a terrorist attack with children in the primary phases

Although we would normally advise that teaching and learning in PSHE education is built into a planned progressive programme, there are times when teachers may need to respond more immediately to unforeseen events, such as terrorist attacks. This guidance gives practical suggestions for ways that you can structure questioning, discussion or further learning about such events.

Introduction

When a terrorist attack occurs, children will hear about it in a number of different ways, some of which may be inaccurate, untrue, or based on rumour or speculation. Wherever they happen, events may create feelings of personal anxiety and fear that children can find hard to articulate: giving them a context to discuss, question and express their thoughts and feelings will help them to process what has happened in a safe environment with a trusted adult. One context for this discussion could be within a PSHE education lesson.

This guidance is not intended as a script or lesson plan, but to help teachers answer questions, structure discussion and, if appropriate, extend children's learning and understanding. Teachers should pick out what they feel is relevant for the nature and circumstances of an event, the age and readiness of the children, and their whole-school ethos and values.

As with the teaching of any PSHE education lesson it is essential to establish or reinforce ground rules for a discussion (for further detail, please read the relevant section in our [guidance on discussing controversial issues](#)). In addition, pastoral care, and, if necessary, safeguarding protocols should be available for any potentially vulnerable children after a discussion about an attack has taken place.

Practical tips

1. Offer reassurance

Children, especially younger ones, may be afraid that a similar attack will happen to them, or to their friends and family. It is important to reassure them from the outset of discussion that such attacks are very rare, and although it is possible, it is highly unlikely that something like this will happen to them, or to anyone they know.

2. Encourage questions and answer them honestly

Younger children are naturally curious, and may arrive in school after hearing about a terrorist event full of questions and theories about what they have seen or heard. To ignore, dismiss, or not answer these questions, or to pretend that nothing has happened, can be counter-productive. It is important to answer children's questions honestly and in an age-appropriate

way, in order to allay possible fears, but also to ensure that children are clear about separating basic facts about an event from speculation, rumour or untruths.

3. Clarify the facts

Starting a discussion about a terrorist attack could be broadly structured under three questions:

- What exactly has happened?
- What is happening now?
- How do we know?

It is important to help children separate the ‘basic facts’ that are known (‘a bomb has exploded in a city’; ‘people were injured/ killed’) from inaccurate or speculative interpretations. Make sure you are clear of the difference between factual information, speculation and rumour in your responses to their questions (and to call out absolute untruths).

You could start by giving examples of fact, speculation and rumour that might happen every day – things we know and things we can’t be sure of – before moving discussion on to what has happened. You could also help children recognise the language of fact, speculation and rumour, so they can come to a less confusing understanding about an event.

Examples of responses could include:

Factual information:

- We don’t know for sure what happened/ who did it/why they did it [yet].
- All we know for sure is [*factual, age-appropriate explanation of the attack*]
- Terrorist attacks are often confusing. It may take a long time for investigators to find out what really happened. News from sources we trust such as the BBC will report the facts when they have them.

Language: we know that...; government/the police/the BBC/a trusted source has confirmed...

Speculation:

- Speculation means putting together lots of people’s ideas or experiences of an event and making a kind of guess about what happened. The people making those guesses don’t have any more facts than we do, so their speculations might be wrong.
- Speculations can change, sometimes very quickly.
- Anyone can speculate on what happened, even if they weren’t there. You or your friends might have your own speculations, but it doesn’t mean that they are true.
- It is very hard to understand why some people do such awful things. We can speculate about why this event happened, but we cannot know for sure.
- Sometimes people make up their own speculations because they want to convince us to believe something that *they* think is true.

Language: it seems/appears...; we think...; the story we’ve put together is...; witnesses say...

Rumour:

- A rumour is a story about an event that might not be true at all – each time someone repeats it, it changes a little bit and you don’t know which bits are true, which bits are based on truth, and which are made up.

- People might read rumours on social media and spread them among their friends. Rumours can spread and change very quickly this way.
- Even if lots of people are talking about or spreading a rumour, even online, it still doesn't mean that it is true.
- It's really important to think about or check whether something is a rumour before you decide to believe it or repeat it.

Language: apparently...; I heard that...; my mum's friend's aunty says...; her dad said...; I read on Facebook...

Children of this age will still see parents, older siblings or other adult family members as sources of absolute authority. It is important to emphasise what facts are known about an attack, rather than commenting directly, on, or be seen to be judging, a 'my mum says...' -type comment.

4. Allow children to talk about their feelings

A terrorist attack can create a range of strong feelings within children, including curiosity, anxiety and fear, and even excitement. The feelings they have, and the strength of those feelings, can depend on many things, such as what they have seen or heard, from where or whom they got the information, or if they have some kind of connection – even an apparently tenuous one – to where the event took place or those involved or caught up in it.

The way that children show their feelings will also vary, with some being open about their emotions, and others appearing to ignore or 'block out' what has happened. It is important that the feelings children express are listened to and valued, but differing reactions should be respected, and appropriate 'space' offered to those who need it.

Feelings could be explored by asking questions such as the following:

- How do we feel about what has happened?
- Do we all have the same feelings about what has happened, or are our feelings different?
- What kinds of things/who might affect our feelings? (e.g. family, media, others' attitudes, values etc.)

Providing a 'Worry/Question box' is a good way for children to ask questions anonymously, or submit questions which might come up for them later on, and it can also help you to prepare answers to tricky or sensitive questions ahead of discussion in a PSHE lesson.

5. Encourage community cohesion

Some children may express divisive feelings such as blame – not just of the perpetrator(s) of the terrorist act, but of the group or community from which they came, or on whose behalf they claimed to act. There may also be children in the class and/or school from these groups who might be afraid of others' reactions towards them. It is vital to reassure any children from particular faith or community groups that they are a valued and important part of the school community, and to remind all children of the school's attitude towards behaviours such as bullying or racism.

You can challenge divisive thinking by helping children to recognise the dangers of stereotyping whole groups based on the actions of a small number of individuals – this discussion could be included within a wider PSHE context looking at issues of diversity, community and stereotyping.

Examples of questions for discussion could include:

- Might this event make some people feel differently about a particular country/faith/certain groups of people/a community?
- Do all the people in that country/faith/ group/community believe that what this person did was right?
- Do all the people in that country/faith/ group/community have the same opinions or believe the same things as the person who carried out the terrorist attack?
- Are there any people in our community who may be feeling afraid or anxious at the moment?
- What can we do to make sure that everyone in our school community feels supported and safe?
- How can we help our community stay strong together?

Other things your school can do

- Signpost sources of support, including staff within school who are available if children have further questions or worries.
- Some schools might find a form of reflection helpful (it can, but doesn't need to be religious). This could include:
 - a minute's silence or similar reflective time in a whole-school assembly or within class at the same time in the day (this could tie in with any national 'official' silences)
 - lighting a candle, playing gentle music or writing prayers/non-religious reflections with which to start an assembly
 - creating a remembrance book, or a school display
 - holding a fundraising event for a relevant charity.

Remember that it is also important that members of staff who are leading discussions or activities related to a terrorist attack are given opportunities to 'offload', or talk with one another, perhaps in a staff meeting or similar about the questions children have asked and any issues raised. Staff may be trying to answer questions or deal with anxieties that they themselves may have, albeit at a different level, and they should be offered opportunities to share thoughts and offer or receive support if they need it.